

27 August 1968

Logistic Developments in the Panhandle of North Vietnam, 19-25 August, 1968Activities South of the 19th ParallelArmed Reconnaissance Sorties

<u>This Week (19-25 August) *</u>	<u>Last Week (12-18 August)*</u>
437 sorties per day	353 sorties per day
57 percent in Route Package I	68 percent in Route Package I
33 percent in Route Package II	22 percent in Route Package II
10 percent in Route Package III (below 19° North)	10 percent in Route Package III (below 19° North)

For the Period 1 January - 25 August

267 sorties per day
 60 percent in Route Package I
 24 percent in Route Package II
 16 percent in Route Package III

Weather ***

Above 19° North: Except for poor weather conditions on 24 and 25 August, generally good weather was present over the northern section of the country.

* The rate of attack for the period 12-25 August may be as much as five percent below the actual rate because some reports from operating units in Southeast Asia were not available at the time of publication.

** Beginning 1 April nearly all sorties have been flown south of the 19th Parallel.

*** Good weather - 10,000 feet or more ceiling, and five miles or more visibility.

Fair weather - 5-10 thousand feet ceiling, and five miles or more visibility.

Poor weather - Less than 5,000 feet ceiling, and/or five miles or less visibility.

DIA and USAF review(s) completed.

Below 19° North: Poor weather prevailed over the inland areas of the Panhandle throughout the week. But for two days near the end of the week, generally good weather covered the lower lying coastal portions of the Panhandle.

Highways

	Preliminary Pilot Reports on Trucks*		
	<u>Sighted</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
This Week (19-25 Aug)	529	247	29
Last Week (12-18 Aug)	407	69	45
Weekly Average (since 1 Apr 68)	702	125	80
Weekly Average (since 1 Jan 68)	539	90	66

Remarks:

Sightings of trucks and the number of trucks reported destroyed and damaged increased this past week, partly as a result of improved weather in scattered areas of the Panhandle and a 25 percent increase in the rate of attack. Sightings were up 30 percent over last week's low figure, but still 25 percent below the weekly average noted since 1 April. However, the numerous pilot reports this week of "suspected" trucks and "movers" suggest that truck activity within the Panahdle was much greater than that reflected in the table above. The total of trucks reported destroyed and damaged was significantly higher this week compared with last week and also the weekly average, in fact, the number destroyed this week

* These are preliminary data, included to indicate trends in activity. Final data on trucks sighted, destroyed and damaged may be considerably greater, for the above compilations are based on incompletely reporting.

is the largest such total reported so far this year. The total of destroyed and damaged trucks this week was more than double last week's and ³⁵ ₂₅ percent above the weekly average noted since 1 April.

While the majority of truck sighting this week were generally limited to small groups of less than five, there were several moderate-sized concentrations detected. During mid-morning on 23 August thirty trucks were observed parked along Route 1A just south of Ron. Fifteen of these were destroyed in resulting attacks. Another concentration of more than 25 trucks were discovered camouflaged in a truck park located on Route 82 south of the Linh Cam Ferry. Pilots reported destroying at least 23 vehicles at this site. And during the night of 21 August, pilots sighted two vehicle convoys of about twenty trucks each heading south along Route 15 near the junction of Routes 15 and 101. Due to poor visibility, no assessment was given on the results of attacks against these convoys.

Attacks against highway targets were very heavy this past week. Aircraft struck numerous highway chokepoints, storage areas and transshipment points located along the major infiltration routes leading toward southern Laos and the DMZ. A large number of attacks against storage areas and suspected storage areas resulted in multiple secondary explosions indicating large stores of POL and ammunition.

Roadwatch Teams

	Route	Period	Total Trucks Counted for Period		
			Latest Period	Previous Period	Weekly Average
25X1	15 [redacted] north of Mu Gia Pass)	(15-22 Aug) 152S; 59N	(7-14 Aug) 44S; 107N	175S; 154N *	1968
	912	(15-22 Aug) 29S; 37N	(12-14 Aug) 11S; 15N	N.A	

Remarks:

The team on Route 912 [redacted]

may not represent all the traffic passing over the road by its position.

All the southbound truck movement on Route 15 was concentrated in 3 days of the 7 day period, and the northbound movement in 1 day. On 16 August the team reported 34 trucks moving south in a 38-minute period.

Railroads

		Preliminary Pilot Reports on Railroad Cars		
		Sighted	Destroyed	Damaged
This Week (19-25 Aug)	27	0	4	
Last Week (12-18 Aug)	29	1	9	
Weekly Average (since 1 Apr 68)	10	1	2	
Weekly Average (since 1 Jan 68)	21	2	4	

Remarks:

Attacks against railroad targets during the past week were concentrated against the railroad bridges at Dien Chau and Tam Da, two key

* Includes information from reports of other teams positioned near the border from January - June 1968.

chokepoints on the rail line north of Vinh. Constant attacks against these crossings have prevented through-rail service to Vinh since at least early June and the latest attacks will deter repair attempts to the bridges. Other targets included railroad bridges and tunnels on the tramway south of Vinh.

Nearly all the railroad cars sighted during the week were near Bai Duc Thom, the key storage/transshipment area at the intersection of Routes 15 and 151. The continued presence of rail cars and truck locomotives in this area indicates the North Vietnamese continue to use some rail shuttle service in the Panhandle to move goods south.

Waterways

	Preliminary Pilot Reports on Watercraft		
	<u>Sighted</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
This Week (19-25 Aug)	635	88	81
Last Week (12-18 Aug)	758	130	124
Weekly Average (since 1 Apr 68)	431	63	76
Weekly Average (since 1 Jan 68)	324	48	62

Remarks:

Pilots reported a high level of watercraft activity this week, continuing a trend that had been observed during the past month. Watercraft sighting for the period 22 July - 25 August have averaged 785 craft per week. This compares with the average weekly sightings from 1 April - 22 July of 322. Thus in the past five weeks sightings of watercraft have been more than double the previous weekly average to 1 April.

The heaviest watercraft concentrations this week were noted on the

Dai Giang, southwest of Dong Hoi where 100 sampans were noted on 19 August, and on the Nguon Nay near Quang Khe. Activity on the Nguon Nay was observed throughout the week with a peak of 50 boats and 15 waterborne logistic craft sighted on 19 August.

Logistic Activity Between the 19th and 20th Parallels

Poor weather and a lack of good photo intelligence precluded detection of any significant logistic developments between the 19th and 20th Parallels. The recent tropical storm, Rose, which caused extensive flooding in the Thanh Hoa area probably hindered logistical activities throughout much of the northern regions, particularly the Hanoi - Haiphong areas and along the Hanoi - Lao Cai railroad line.

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